



U.S. Mint Strikes New American Buffalo Commemorative Coin

May 4, 2001

Proceeds to Fund National Museum of the American Indian

U.S. Mint in Denver to strike the first American Buffalo Commemorative Coin. Mr. Johnson was joined by Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO), Representative Frank Lucas (R-OK) and Elizabeth Duggal, National Campaign Director for the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). "James Earle Fraser's classic designs are recognized as icons of the original Americans," said Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill, speaking from Washington, D.C. "How fitting it is that these enduring images contribute to the creation of an institution to honor and preserve this country's precious Native American culture."

The one-dollar silver commemorative coin is based on the celebrated Buffalo nickel, designed by James Earle Fraser and minted from 1913 through 1938. Three different American Indians, Chief Iron Tail, Chief Big Tree and Chief Two Moons, who were performers in Wild West shows in New York City, modeled for Fraser. The buffalo model for the coin came from New York's Central Park Zoo.

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the American Buffalo Commemorative Coin will help fund the opening of the NMAI, scheduled for 2004 in Washington, DC, as well as the museum's endowment and educational outreach efforts.

"The Buffalo was always a great benefit and blessing to American Indians in the past," said Rick West, Director of the National Museum of the American Indian. "And just as the buffalo made our lives whole in the 19th century, the sales of the American Buffalo Commemorative Coin in the 21st century will benefit the museum that serves to commemorate and celebrate the lives of American Indians."

The obverse of the American Buffalo Commemorative Coin features a striking American Indian profile and the reverse features an American buffalo. The coin is legal tender and struck from 26.73 grams of 90% silver. The uncirculated coin will be minted in Denver, Colorado and the proof coin will be minted in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Sen. Campbell, one of 44 Chiefs of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and Rep. Lucas sponsored the American Buffalo Coin Commemorative Coin Act of 2000, which authorized the American Buffalo Commemorative Coin. The Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee also endorsed the legislation.

The coin goes on sale June 7. Customers may call 1-800-USA-MINT to order by telephone. Operators will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to take orders. Customers may also order by mail; send check or money order to United States Mint, P.O. Box 382614, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-8614. Please allow 4-6 weeks from June 7 for delivery.

Beginning June 11, customers may order the American Buffalo Commemorative Coin directly online via the U.S. Mint secure Web site at www.usmint.gov and pay no additional shipping and handling charges. Customers who prefer to fax their orders may download an order form from the Web site and fax it to (301) 344-4150, Attn: Order Processing.

Digital images of the American Buffalo Commemorative Silver Dollar are available online at <http://www.usmint.gov/pressroom/index.cfm?action=Photo>

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